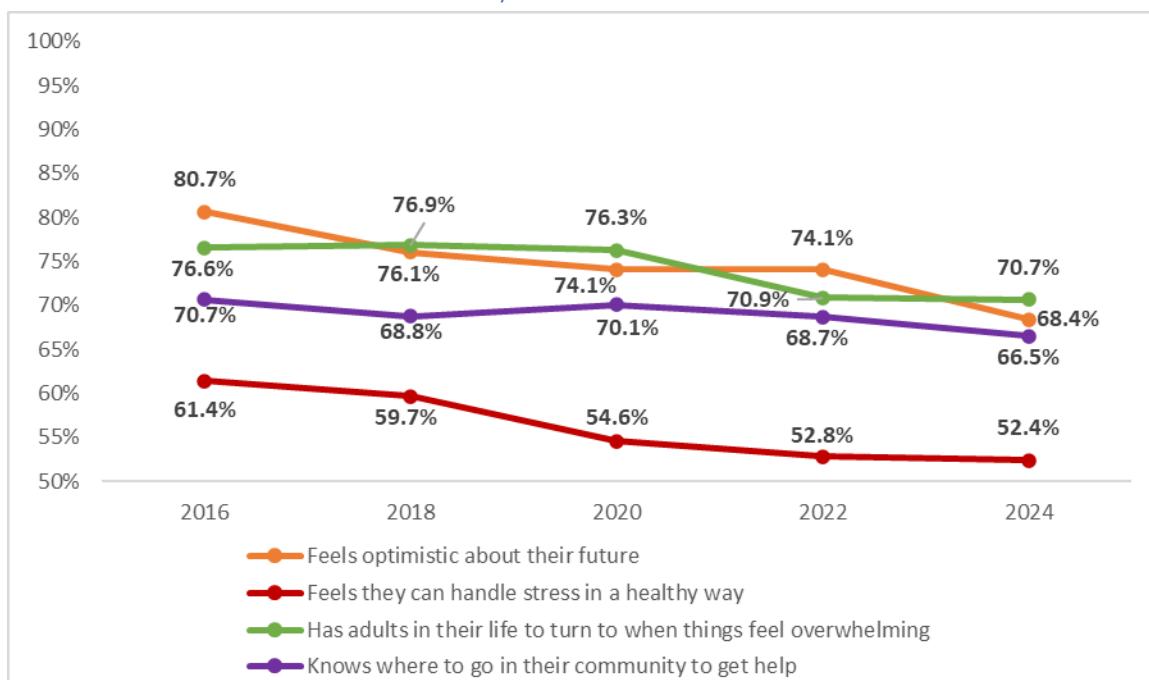


Resiliency in Missouri

Resilience is a person's ability or capacity to handle and recover from stress or trauma. When a person has high resiliency, they have more tools to avoid risky behaviors such as substance misuse. The Missouri Student Survey, a survey which measures mental health and substance misuse indicators in youth from 6th to 12th grade, asks four questions designed to measure resilience. These questions measured whether the youth felt optimistic about their future, felt they handle stress in a healthy way, has adults in their life they can turn to when things feel overwhelming to them, and whether they know where to go in their community if they need help.

Resiliency Indicators Over Time

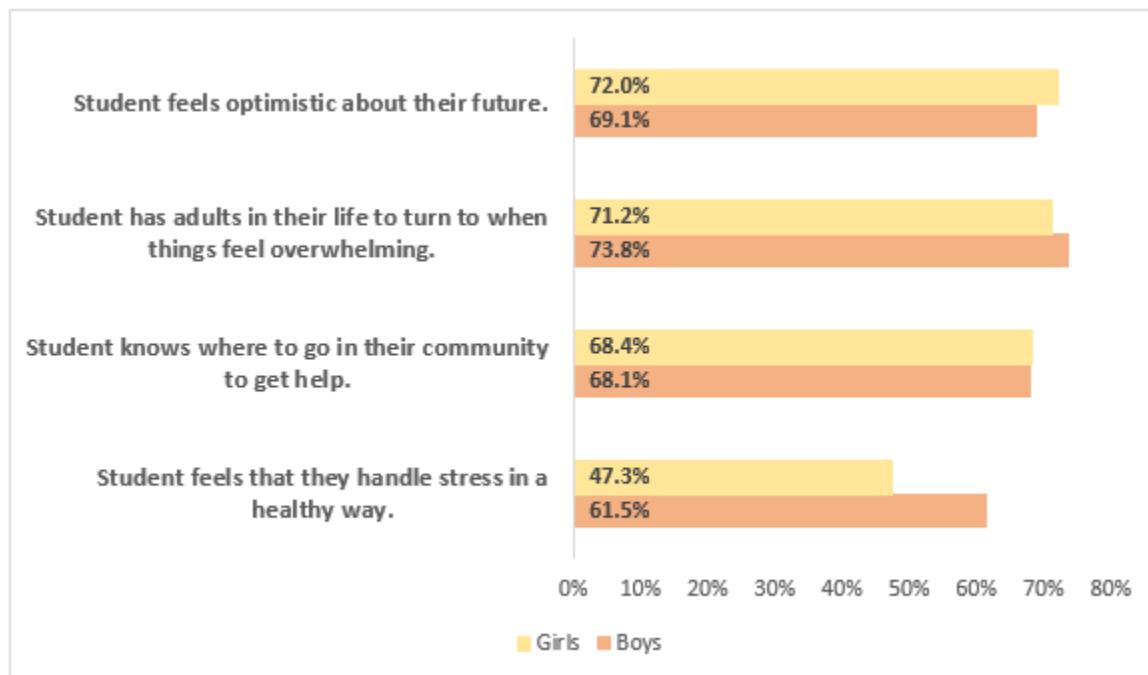


Since at least 2016, the percentages of students who answered affirmatively in these four categories has dropped over time, with the largest decreases showing in students who felt optimistic about their future and those who felt they can handle stress in a healthy way.

While in 2016, over 80% of students said they felt optimistic about their future, only 68.4% answered this way in 2024, dropping 12.3% in eight years. When asked whether they felt they can handle stress in a healthy way, 61.4% answered affirmatively in 2016. This dropped to 52.4% in 2024, decreasing a total of nine percent.

There was little difference between how boys and girls answered whether they felt optimistic about their future (72% for girls versus 69.1% for boys), whether they have adults to turn to when life feels overwhelming (71.2% for girls versus 73.8% for boys), or whether they know where to go in their community to get help (68.4% for girls versus 68.1% for boys). However, there appears to be a large discrepancy in how students feel they handle stress. About 61.5% of boys who took the survey in 2024 and only 47.3% of girls believed that they handle stress in a healthy way.

Resiliency by Gender 2024



Contact the Behavioral Health Epidemiological Workgroup:

For more information contact [Susan Bradford](#)

[Learn about the Behavioral Health Epidemiological Workgroup](#)